

Activate America®

Activate America is the YMCA's response to the nation's growing health crisis. Through Activate America, YMCAs are redefining themselves to better support "health seekers"—individuals of all ages who are struggling to achieve and maintain well-being of spirit, mind and body. Not only are YMCAs changing the way they work inside their facilities to influence and motivate health seekers to make positive changes, but they are also taking an active role in their communities to help support approaches that make it easier to overcome barriers to healthier living.

Activate America in Progress

For the last few years, the YMCA has incorporated the vision reflected in **Activate America** into more and more aspects of its work. For example, we're transforming YMCA child care sites into environments where physical activity, healthy eating and improved interpersonal connections are the norm. And about two-thirds of YMCAs across the country have committed to a capacity building process to better meet the needs of health seekers. Here are some other ways in which the vision reflected in Activate America is becoming increasingly inseparable from the broader work of the YMCA:

- **Each September**, about 1,500 YMCAs participate in *America On the Move Week with the YMCA*. Nationwide events inspire Americans to take small, daily steps to increase their level of activity and improve their overall well-being.
- **Each spring**, nearly 1,800 YMCAs host a *YMCA Healthy Kids® Day*—a free interactive special event that employs fun, engaging and creative activities to encourage children and families to adopt behaviors that support healthy lifestyles.
- The goal of the YMCA's **Healthier Communities Initiatives**—Pioneering Healthier Communities, Statewide Pioneering Healthier Communities and ACHIEVE—is to prevent chronic disease by engaging community leaders in a process that allows them to explore, create and implement policy and environmental change strategies that lead to opportunities for increased physical activity and healthy eating. Currently 138 communities are engaged in these efforts.

- In the last 10 years, obesity rates in the United States have increased **60%**.
- The current generation of American children could be the **first to lead shorter lives** than their parents, according to the New England Journal of Medicine.
- More than **50%** of U.S. adults do not get enough physical activity to make a difference in their health.
- Health problems related to obesity cost our country an estimated **\$117 billion** a year due to direct health care costs, as well as the indirect economic costs of lost productivity.

YMCA of the USA acknowledges the generous support of the following Activate America donors:

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- YMCAs—Mission Impact Partners and Capacity Building YMCAs

Expert Advisors:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Harvard School of Public Health
- Stanford University School of Medicine
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

For more information about **Activate America**, please visit: www.ymca.net.

America's 2,687 YMCAs serve more than 21 million people each year, uniting men, women, and children of all ages, races, faiths, backgrounds, abilities and income levels.

